

Developmental Disabilities Council
Public Policy Committee
DRAFT MINUTES
July 20, 2006

Present: Lori Flood (chair), Janet Adams, (DDD), Bill Anderson, Leo Finnegan, Larry Garman, Tabitha Harrison (DOH), George Walker, Diana Zottman

Staff: Donna Patrick, Brian Dahl

Call to Order / Adjust Agenda / Approve March Minutes

Diana called the meeting to order for Lori and introductions were made. There were no adjustments to the agenda.

MOTION: Public Policy Committee approves the March meeting minutes. Motion approved with Bill abstaining.

Interim Legislative Work / Policy Issues

DDD Spending Plan: Ed explained the over expenditure in DDD's residential budget (H51) due to increasing needs of people on waivers who have received assessments. The 2006 fiscal year that just ended resulted in a \$6-8 million budget deficit in H51 and the 2007 residential budget is projected to be overspent by \$8-10 million. The 2006 deficit seems to be taken care of, leaving the ongoing deficit.

The directive from the Governor is that all agencies must "manage" their budgets. This caused DDD to stop filling residential vacancies unless there are legislatively-provided dollars and ADSA was required to develop a DDD spending plan, outlining ways money will be saved and the Division's category H51 budget brought into balance.

The two areas of major controversy are the provisions to require people who are working and not on SSI to pay for a portion of their care (cost sharing at an average of \$200/month) and moving people in with roommates to reduce living expenses.

This issue is on the Governor's radar screen and she has directed the agency to figure out ways to fix it. Advocates have made suggestions about where money and savings could be found that wouldn't harm people with developmental disabilities and are discussing tactics if the plan continues to be implemented.

Winning the Waiting Game / Budget for the Unserved

The advocates are putting together a budget that would address the needs and costs of serving the unserved. Ed reviewed the budget requests in the areas of employment, residential supports, community crisis respite, family support, behavior supports under Medicaid Personal Care, program improvements and oversight, case managers and provider wages. The initial total is about \$70 million, about half of which is provider wages.

Ombudsman Models

Ed reviewed ombudsman models currently in use in our state. The first is an ombudsman housed within state government or the system involved (Family and Children's Ombudsman is in the Governor's Office and the Mental Health and Special Education Ombudsmen are in the regional support networks and the Office of the Superintendent of Special Education). The second is contracted out by the state to an independent non-profit (Long-Term Care Ombudsman). The issue is ties to the system the ombudsman office is supposed to watch.

Representative Roberts is again interested in pursuing a DD Ombudsman that would be under the Governor's office. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman relies heavily on volunteers, which would be impractical in the DD system.

Federal Budget Deficit Reform Act

The Deficit Reform Act was signed into law in February of this year. The Act includes the requirement to establish nationality and citizenship status for people to receive Medicaid services and seniors having five years instead of three to transfer assets to qualify for Medicaid.

Also included are provisions of the Family Opportunity Act and Money Follows the Person. Work needs to be done to see what Washington will do with these changes.

Fodor Homes Update

Fodor Homes has lost their foster care license and DDD has had to move children to other facilities or the homes. Seven children are temporarily at Fircrest while options are being developed. This might be a good subject for a future presentation by Janet.

Task Force Updates

Donna serves on the advisory committees to the state Long-Term Care Task Force. The advisory committees and the task force's work appear to be heavily weighted toward aging. The big issue is how to pay for long-term care.

Staff has been serving on a Family Support Task Force to combine the various family support programs. There is a long way to go before things will be worked out.

DD Community Trust - DSHS is working on determining lease values and assets at Rainier School and Lakeland Village. They will have a report soon for the Legislature. The financial gain from the leases is significantly less than hoped and the timber possibilities at Rainier School are up in the air. More discussion will happen to see if it is wise to look at expanding the trust.

In May the Council hosted a retreat for the self-advocate groups, parent coalitions and the Arc where people discussed how the groups might work together more effectively legislatively.

Council 2007 Legislative Agenda

The Committee looked at last year's agenda to use as a template for this years. It was decided that the 2007 agenda should reflect the Waiting Game campaign. Staff will present a draft doing that at the September meeting.

There was some discussion of possible funding sources, such as lottery scratch tickets and special license plates.

There was a discussion about transportation issues and what actions the Council might take. Donna and Leo will be part of a human services group that is following up on ideas generated at the legislative Transportation

Committee work session (initiated by SAIL). The full Council will be asked to forward any ideas in this area to Leo and/or Donna.

Federal issues were covered in the Deficit Reduction Act report. There will be a report to the full Council on the report of the Council's Working Age Adult Policy Task Force.

Report to Council

- Discussion of policy issues
- Options for special needs transportation
- Legislative Agenda in September
- Legislative reception is Jan 24th

Next Meeting Agenda

- Policy issues
- Legislative Agenda
- Information on companion homes?